

CHILDREN & DISASTERS NEWSLETTER



FEMA



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We don't usually play favorites, but September is a month that's especially important here at FEMA. With the weather cooling down and school back in session, the fall season represents a "fresh start" of sorts. What's more, September is National Preparedness Month. This year's theme is "*Don't Wait. Communicate. Make Your Emergency Plan Today.*" September also features the America's PrepareAthon! [National PrepareAthon Day](#) on September 30. This month's issue has more on National PrepareAthon Day as well some great new preparedness resources. Find a full list of articles in the September issue of the *Children and Disasters Newsletter* below:

- [JOIN AMERICA'S PREPAREATHON!](#)
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JOIN AMERICA'S PREPAREATHON!

[National PrepareAthon Day](#) is September 30—the grand finale to the month-long National Preparedness Month. There are many ways you can participate in this nationwide event—both large and small! To give you an idea of how others have taken part, FEMA Youth Preparedness Council Member Austin Witt shared what he did as part of the Spring 2015 America's PrepareAthon! Here is his story:

What do you do when a tornado is imminently threatening your home, or worse off, while you're driving home from work? How can one determine the safest place to be when danger is only a few minutes away? In my rural hometown of Mahaska County, Iowa, one might think there's no reason to answer these questions because 'nothing like that has ever happened before,' but that is so far from the truth. We've had our share of disaster declarations, and because of this, I decided to make a presentation for my local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) covering the topic of severe weather and more specifically, tornadoes.



In conjunction with America's PrepareAthon! on April 30, I presented our team with a technical discussion about the science behind a tornado and safety tips that could be implemented in a variety of situations to help keep people safe when the unthinkable happens. Seeing as many members of the CERT team are trained weather spotters, I decided to use real life situations, both outside and within our community, as well as pictures and videos, to identify the dangers within a storm and how these members can relay life-saving information to emergency officials and the National Weather Service when the situation warrants it.

Of course when planning your own event for America's PrepareAthon! you don't need to go completely over the top. You can participate in simple things like discussing emergency plans with your neighbor, making or updating emergency kits for your loved ones, or conducting an emergency drill at work/home. Anything that helps you and those around you to be better prepared is truly beneficial, no matter how simple the task.

We hope Austin's story will inspire all of you to plan your own preparedness activities for September 30. If you need additional ideas, below are 10 ways you can participate! Make sure you visit the [America's PrepareAthon! website](#) to register your activity or search for activities in your area, and don't forget to follow all the action on [PrepareAthon's Twitter feed](#).



CDC LAUNCHES PREPARATHON THUNDERCLAP

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is on a mission to amplify the [PrepareAthon](#) message. In support of National Preparedness Month and America's PrepareAthon!, the CDC has created a [Thunderclap](#) to help this year's "Don't Wait. Communicate" message reach as many people as possible. This year's theme is all about creating community and meeting neighbors. Many of us don't take the time to engage with those who live nearby. However, in an emergency, neighbors are usually the first on the scene and can provide critical help until first responders arrive.



Building a safe and resilient community requires preparedness efforts at every level. Start small by introducing yourself to your neighbors, ask them about their preparedness plans, and build that relationship. Then we hope all of you will join the movement and sign up to have Thunderclap automatically post one message on your social media account on **September 30 at 12:00PM Eastern Time**. Help spread the message and encourage others to foster connections in their own communities!



Here's how you can participate:

1. Visit the [CDC's Thunderclap page](#).
2. Select Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, or all three!
3. Authorize Thunderclap to use your account (*To post the message, and to count your followers so they can measure the reach of the campaign*).
4. Encourage your friends and followers to do the same.
5. Watch the message spread on September 30!

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PREPAREDNESS TOOLKIT

Disaster can take many forms. It can strike anywhere, at any time. Inspired by the events that transpired during and after Superstorm Sandy, [Enterprise Green Communities](#), in partnership with the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#) and many other supporters, developed the [Ready to Respond: Disaster Staffing Toolkit](#). Based on the [Incident Command System \(ICS\)](#), a planning framework used by first responders, the Toolkit can help affordable housing organizations develop comprehensive disaster staffing plans to protect buildings, residents, and business operations.



Click on the image above to watch an overview of the toolkit, then [download the entire Ready to Respond: Disaster Staffing Toolkit](#) and get started getting your organization prepared!

You also may want to check back to the Enterprise Green Communities website at the end of October, when they will be debuting Multifamily Resilience Strategies. This resource will identify retrofit strategies to make multifamily properties more resilient. Visit the [Ready to Respond Tools for Resilience webpage](#) to learn more!

RESOURCE ANNOUNCEMENT: YOUTH RESEARCH WEBINAR

Children have unique vulnerabilities and capabilities when it comes to disasters. In an effort to mitigate these vulnerabilities and enhance these capabilities, youth preparedness programs should leverage the growing body of research about child psychology and disaster resilience.

FEMA recently posted the *From Tots to Teens: Emerging Research and Practices to Address the Unique Needs of Young Disaster Survivors* webinar and associated resources. This 90-minute webinar covers emerging trends in research on the coping behaviors of children affected by disasters and their practical applications when planning for or working with children. The webinar features three expert speakers who discuss youth preparedness, response and recovery, and resilience science:

- **Ann Masten**, PhD, Regents Professor, Institute of Child Development, University of Minnesota
- **Lori Peek**, PhD, Associate Professor and Co-Director, Center for Disaster and Risk Analysis (CDRA), Colorado State University
- **Jessy Burton**, MSW, Associate Director, Psychosocial Programs, Save the Children US

The webinar also covers the FEMA Youth Preparedness TA Center and the tools and resources available for those developing or implementing local youth preparedness programs.

Be sure to visit the [From Tots to Teens webinar page](#), where you can access the [webinar recording](#), [transcript](#), and [slides](#).

SAVE THE CHILDREN'S STAY CONNECTED CAMPAIGN

Hurricane Katrina led to 5,000 reports of missing children. A decade later, do your children and their care providers know who to contact in case of an emergency, when cellphones may be unreliable? Make sure you have a plan to *Stay Connected* with your family.

To make planning easier, [Save The Children](http://www.savethechildren.org) has a great new resource that allows parents to create an [Emergency Contact Card](#) online. This card will let your child and his or her caregivers know whom to contact in the chaotic aftermath of a calamity. It even allows you to identify a non-local point of contact, so someone outside the affected area can step in if you are unreachable, and captures information about the child's allergies and medication needs.



Head to <http://www.savethechildren.org/Connect> to fill out the Emergency Contact Card form, then be sure to print it out and put it somewhere the child and caregiver can easily access it!

RESOURCE ANNOUNCEMENT: CDC'S ABC BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST



By now, most kids have returned to the classroom. While your little ones are off learning their ABCs, you can take steps to ensure they (and you!) are ready for a disaster. ABC serves as an easy mnemonic, and is featured in the CDC's new ABC Checklist: [Easy as ABC: Steps to Protect Your Child During Emergencies In The School Day](#). This resource guides parents through essential questions about getting prepared, and makes it easy for you to document and save your responses. The [graphic](#) at left summarizes the three important safety steps. We encourage all of you to not only complete a plan for yourself and

your children, but also to share this resource on your social media channels!

We also encourage you to join the preparedness discussion on Twitter. Keep an eye on @NCBDDD, @CDCEmergency, and @CDCgov with hashtags including #ReadyCDC, #firstday, and #backtoschool.

Visit the CDC's [Caring for Children in a Disaster](#) website for more information and additional resources, and be sure to check out the [Parents and Parents-to-be](#) page and the [Schools and Childcare Centers](#) page for more subject-specific materials.

FEMA CORPS APPLICATION DEADLINE APPROACHES

FEMA Corps—a unit of 1,600 service members within AmeriCorps dedicated solely to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery—is currently accepting applications for Corps members to begin serving in February 2016.

FEMA Corps members serve full-time for a 10-month term with an option to extend for a second year. Members serve in teams of eight to 12 and are assigned to projects throughout the region served by their campus. Members are based at one of five regional campuses and travel to complete service projects throughout those regions.

To be considered for FEMA Corps, you must first apply to [AmeriCorps NCCC](#). The program is open to all U.S. citizens between 18 and 24 years old. The application deadline is **October 1, 2015, at 11:59 PM Eastern Time**.

You can learn more about how the program benefits communities and individuals affected by disasters, emergency response organizations, and taxpayers by visiting the [FEMA Corps website](#).



CONTACT US

Email: FEMA-Youth-Preparedness@fema.dhs.gov

Online at <http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness>

Disclaimer: The reader recognizes that the federal government provides links and informational data on various disaster preparedness resources and events and does not endorse any non-federal events, entities, organizations, services or products. Please let us know about other events and services related to youth preparedness that could be included in future newsletters by contacting FEMA-Youth-Preparedness@fema.dhs.gov.

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